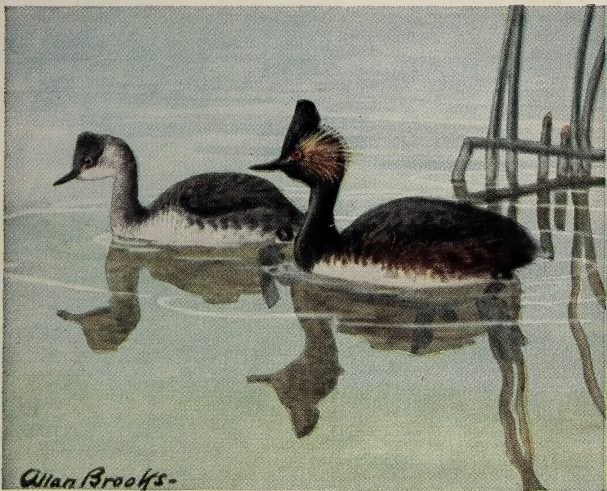


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EARED GREBE

Colymbus caspicus

Le Grèbe à cou noir

Length, about 13 inches

Though common on the sloughs of the Prairie Provinces and the marshy valley ponds of southern British Columbia, the Eared Grebe is accidental in eastern Canada.

It is somewhat like the Horned Grebe, but note the black instead of red neck, the upright, pointed, helmet-like crest and smooth face, instead of the lower lying "horns" and the deeply ruffed cheeks.

It nests in communities, in many cases of large size, in the deep water marshes in nests of vegetable waste, gathered from the surface or dredged from the bottom. Its eggs are three to four in a set, dull white, usually much soiled, and are covered with the nest material when left by the parent.

It feeds on aquatic life, insects, crustaceans, and some small fish, though probably the damage it does to the latter is unappreciable.

The plumage of its breast was at one time largely used for millinery trimming.

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GREAT BLUE HERON

Ardea herodias

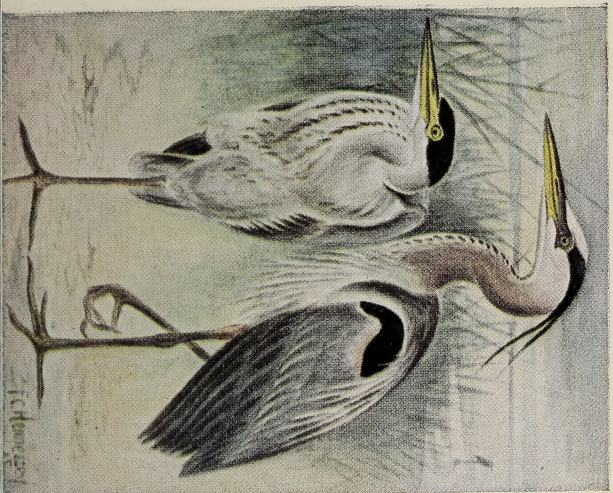
Le Grand Héron bleu

Length, about 42 inches

The Great Blue Heron is known to every frequenter of our rivers, shores, and marshes. Standing statuesquely in the shallows awaiting the luckless minnow to come within reach of its rapier-like bill, or with neck folded away on its chest, long bill projecting from the shoulders, and legs trailing far behind as it bears away on heavy beating wings, it is a familiar sight.

Over much of its range it is commonly called "Blue Crane," but it is not a crane at all and belongs to an entirely different order of birds.

It usually nests in large communities in enormously bulky nests set high in the branches of big trees in swampy grounds, often many nests to a tree. Occasionally it builds on the ground, especially on the more secluded islets of the prairie lakes. It is found from coast to coast.

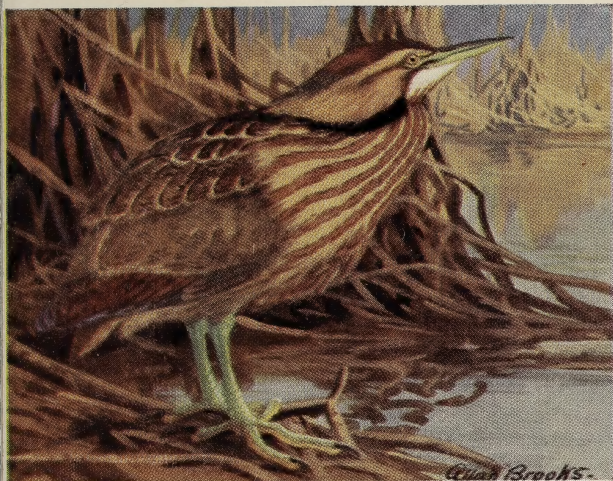


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AMERICAN BITTERN

Botaurus lentiginosus

Le Butor américain

Length, about 28 inches

The booming of the lonely bittern is a favourite subject of Old World poets. The local names of "Stake-driver" and "Thunder-pumper," by which this bird is called, relate to the strange, gurgling, squashy, dull hammering sounds it utters as a love song in the depths of the lonely and mysterious marshes.

The bitterns are more heavily built than herons and are birds of reedy or grassy marshlands rather than broad, open flats and muddy shallows. They glide through the narrow ways feeding on luckless frog, newt, minnow, and insect by quick, silent approach and lightning bill, rather than by statuesquely standing at post to await what comes.

Bitterns are common in suitable localities across the continent and are equally at home in the smallest grassy slough, along the smaller creeks, and in great marshy stretches.

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CANADA GOOSE

Branta canadensis

La Bernache canadienne

Length, about 23-39 inches

This is the wild goose of North America and perhaps the most sought-after game bird of Canada. As it flies in characteristic V-formation and its wild honking comes down to the bleak fields from which winter has scarcely fled, it gives us the first hopes of coming spring, and in the autumn its departing ranks tell us that mild days are over and winter is at hand.

The Canada Goose is found across the continent, breeding well to the north in eastern Canada, but down and across the southern border on the prairies and westward. There are several races in Canada, differing mostly in size from the little Cackling Goose of the northwest coast, scarcely larger than a large Mallard Duck, to the big "Honker" of the east and along our southern boundary. All these, however, show the striking black head and neck ("stocking" in general parlance) with contrasting white cheeks usually joined across the throat.

(Series A, No. 5)

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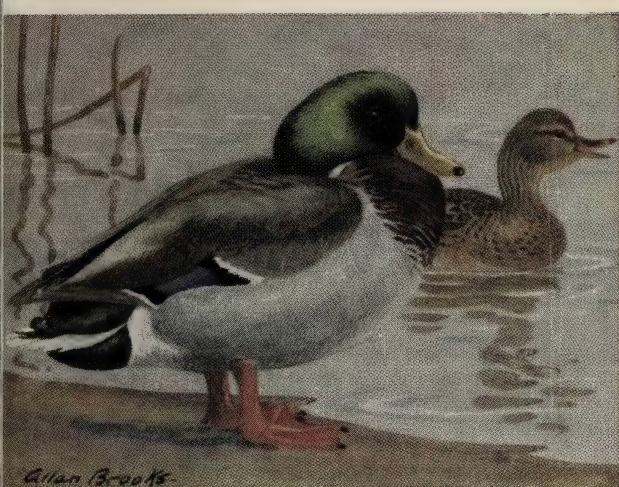
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MALLARD

Anas platyrhynchos

Le Canard malard

Length, about 23 inches

One of the most famous of the ducks. In the Old Country it alone of all the ducks is dignified by the popular name "The Wild Duck." It is also the parent stock from which most of our domestic ducks are descended.

It inhabits much of southern Canada but is rare in the Maritime Provinces and reaches the height of its abundance in the Prairie Provinces, where it is sought by sportsmen for both its sporting value and its table excellence. Stubble-fed Mallard is the delight of the epicure, and its large size only increases the feast.

It is a typical pond or surface-feeding duck, tipping in the water with head down to the bottom and tail pointed frantically toward the zenith, instead of diving.

It lays eight to twelve greyish or greenish white eggs in a nest on the ground, sometimes at considerable distance from water.

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WOOD DUCK

Aix sponsa

Le Canard huppé

Length, about 18.5 inches

Probably the most beautiful duck in the world and quite a favourite for domestication on ornamental waters in public and private parks.

This lovely little duck originally was common on most of the ox-bows and dead waters of the more southern parts of eastern Canada and British Columbia. Owing to its beauty, the ease with which it could be "jumped" in its quiet woodland waters, and the fact that it nested in the earliest settled areas, it became greatly reduced in number. Fortunately, special efforts at protection have had their effect and now it seems to be recovering something of its old numbers over most of its range.

Contrary to what is usually expected of a duck, it builds its nest in hollow trees, often at considerable distance from the ground, from whence the young tumble down in safety and are led to water by the parent. In various parts of the country several other species of duck, like the Golden-eye or the Buffle-head, nest in trees and are popularly, though incorrectly, known as "Wood Duck."

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LESSER SCAUP DUCK

Aythya affinis

Le Petit Morillon

Length, about 16.5 inches

More commonly known as "Lesser Blue-bill" or "Marsh Blue-bill," one of the ducks well known to sportsmen. It is almost exactly similar, except for size, to the Greater Scaup or Greater Blue-bill, a bird that comes earlier in the spring and later in the autumn.

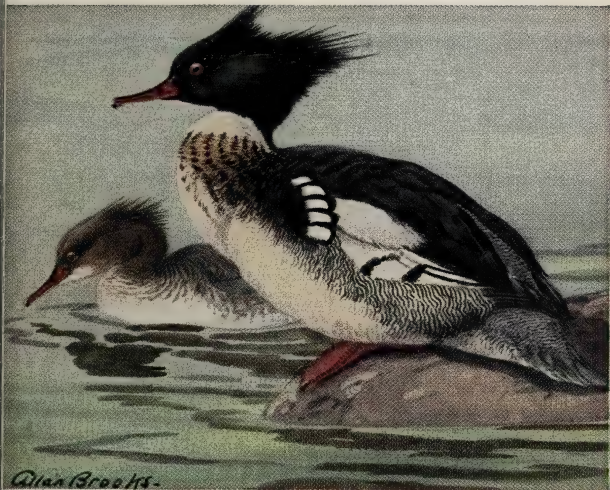
It is more common in the interior and on the west coast than in the east but is not generally so well regarded for the table as some other species.

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RED-BREASTED MERGANSER

Mergus serrator

Le Bec-Scie à poitrine rousse

Length, about 22 inches

One of the birds commonly known as "Saw-bills" or "Fish Ducks," disappointing to both sportsman and epicure, as they are generally regarded as worthless for the table.

Undoubtedly both this merganser and its close relative, the American Merganser, eat an appreciable amount of small fish, but unless they occur in unusual numbers on waters where angling is the primary interest, their depredations can be looked upon with complacency.

It is prolific and deposits eight or ten buffy eggs in a nest on the ground, sometimes amidst rocks, near water on the lakes and clear streams of the northern spruce belt. The brood of mother and little downlings abroad on the open water would seem like easy prey; but, as many canoeists have found, they can splash their way over the surface with a speed that taxes the best paddler, and then, just when about to be overtaken, presto, all dive, to come up in opposite directions to scatter to the four points of the compass.

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RED-TAILED HAWK

Buteo jamaicensis

La Buse à queue rousse

Length, about 20 inches

One of the largest and, unhappily, most misunderstood of our hawks. By most decided preference it hunts fur rather than feathers. In the gopher-ridden lands of the west it is definitely an asset to any farm. The number of rodent pests demanded and taken by it and its young is an important factor in agricultural success. True, it does fall from grace occasionally, and when gophers fail or when hunger untempered by experience urges, immature birds are easy prey. Its weight and size make it a formidable antagonist to game and poultry. Even in the east where gophers are not known and mice form only a lesser plague, the balance is well in favour of this hawk. In the west it warrants every protection it can be given, and the price of a neglected pullet or an occasional game bird is small pay for its good services.

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MARSH HAWK

Circus cyaneus

Le Busard des marais

Length, about 19 inches

Though strikingly different when young, the Marsh Hawk when mature can be told from all other Canadian hawks by its white rump. It is particularly a marsh and moorland bird, beating up and down, back and forth, over the open, and picking up such luckless prey as its sharp eyes may espy in the covering grass and reeds.

It is a bird of mixed value to man. As a mouser it is particularly efficient, and mice form the mainstay of its diet throughout the year. It is a lightly-built, active bird and no match for prey of any size, but in early summer when small ducklings fill the marshes, especially in the west, and little upland game stray momentarily away from parental protection, a certain proportion of them serve the larder of the Marsh Hawk's nest. The economic status of the Marsh Hawk then varies with season, place, and local values, but without doubt the score for the species as a whole stands well in its favour.

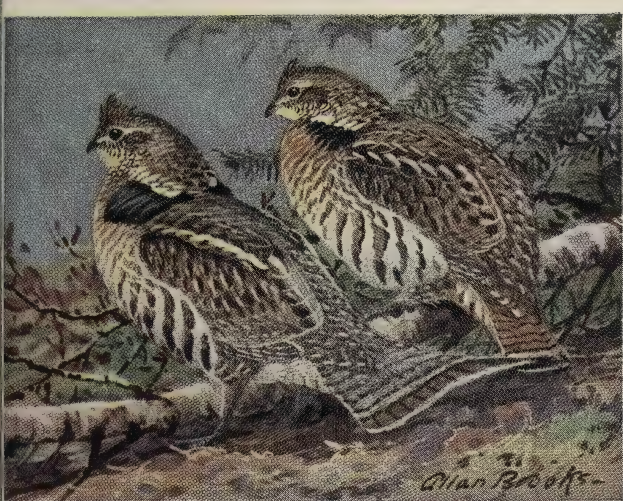


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RUFFED GROUSE

Bonasa umbellus

La Gélinothe huppée

Length, about 17 inches

The Ruffed Grouse, variously known as "Partridge," "Birch Partridge", or even in some sections "Pheasant," is probably the king of American game birds. An inhabitant of the denser woods, it lies well to a dog, rises at the feet and hurtles away through the brush with a surprising suddenness that shakes the nerves of all but the seasoned shooter.

Unfortunately, this gamy wisdom has not been learned by all the species immediately, and in the more recently settled sections where experience has not eliminated the unwise, it shows a foolish innocence in the presence of human enemies that is but too tempting an opportunity for the pot-hunter.

The Ruffed Grouse is more or less common through the wooded sections across the continent.

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SHARP-TAILED GROUSE

Pedixæetes phasianellus

La Gélinotte à queue fine

Length, about 17.5 inches

PRAIRIE CHICKEN

Tympanuchus cupido

La Poule des prairies

Length, about 18 inches

These two birds are more or less confused throughout our prairie and western sections under the name "Prairie Chicken," though properly the name belongs to the latter alone.

The Sharp-tail is a bird of the bush and the bluffy prairies and occurs in the north from Hudson Bay west to Alaska, coming down to our southern borders on the prairies and westward.

The Prairie Chicken can be told from the Sharp-tail by its unpointed tail and by bars across the breast instead of a multitude of small v-marks. It is distinctly a bird of the prairies and has worked north, following the wheat fields into our Prairie Provinces, within historical times. It is the true "Prairie Chicken" of the west but in Canada is more generally known as "Square-tail," and its proper cognomen is often given to the previously mentioned species.

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AMERICAN COOT

Fulica americana

La Foulque américaine

Length, about 15 inches

The Coot or Mud-hen looks like a duck and is often mistaken for it by the general observer. In summer it inhabits the reed-beds of our sloughs and marshes, swimming the channels and gliding familiarly through their tangled density with almost mysterious ease. As nesters the birds are aggressive, guard their chosen territory well, and seem to be respected if not feared by their bird neighbours. In the autumn they gather in dense flocks out on the broader water, sometimes looking like black rafts at sea.

Coots are not generally regarded as legitimate game birds by experienced gunners, and their pursuit is usually left to the pot-hunter and the juvenile or budding sportsman.

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BLACK-BELLIED PLOVER

Squatarola squatarola

Le Pluvier à ventre noir

Length, about 11 inches

The Black-bellied Plover in its differing seasonal plumages is so much like the Golden Plover that the general observer is very likely to confuse them. The most obvious character of this species is the black spot of the axillaries under the wing and the white rump, both quite visible under ordinarily favourable conditions in flight.

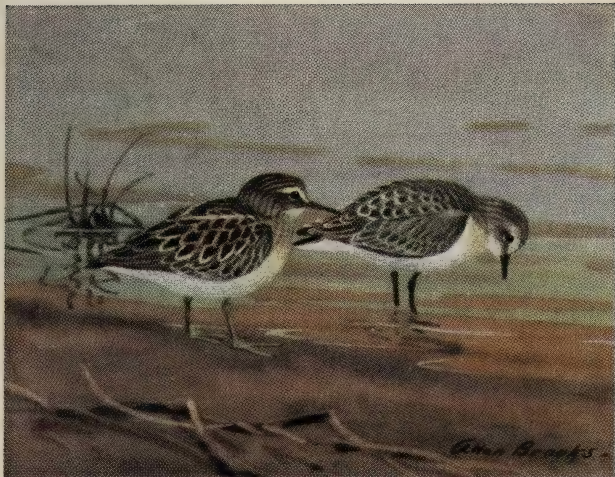
The species is found more or less commonly in migration across the continent on its seasonal flights to and from its breeding grounds in the Far North.

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LEAST SANDPIPER

Erolia minutilla

Le Bécasseau minuscule

Length, about 6 inches

SEMIPALMATED SANDPIPER

Ereunetes pusillus

Le Bécasseau semi-palmé

Length, about 6 inches

These, our two smallest waders, are very much alike in general appearance and habits and are often lumped together in popular parlance as "Peeps."

Spring and autumn they are characteristic features of mud flats or sandy beaches, occurring in large flocks that glean the debris of the wet margins or flash white in the sun in irregular heliographing flocks that blow like wisps of snow over the dark waters.

They are both found across the continent, and breed in the Barren Grounds of the north.

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WILSON'S PHALAROPE

Steganopus tricolor

Le Phalarope de Wilson

Length, about 8.75 inches

The Phalaropes form an anomalous group of waders in which the female is the more highly coloured member of the pair, and the male does the incubating and takes most of the family cares.

Wilson's Phalarope is the only Phalarope that breeds short of the arctic tundra, and in the summer is one of the most beautiful and graceful inhabitants of our prairie sloughs and pools. Unlike other waders it swims readily and constantly, gyrating about in the little open lagoons and pirouetting with fairy-like grace. Its nest is in the grass adjoining.

It is typically a prairie species occurring east or west only on rare occasions.

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PASSENGER PIGEON

Ectopistes migratorius

La Tourte

Length, about 19.25 inches

MOURNING DOVE

Zenaidura macroura

La Tourterelle triste

Length, about 12 inches

The Passenger Pigeon is a sad example of the decline and fall of a once incredibly numerous species. Early historians tell of flocks that in passing darkened the air for hours, of tree limbs broken down with weight of their numbers. Later accounts are of carloads of their bodies on their way to market. Today the only representatives of the species are stuffed, in our museums and collections.

At the same time, the Mourning Dove, of comparatively similar requirements, has persisted in flourishing and under the conditions of civilization that exterminated its relative, has probably increased. Its mournful call can still be heard in the more southern parts of our country from coast to coast.

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GREAT HORNED OWL

Bubo virginianus

Le Grand Duc

Length, about 22 inches

The largest, strongest, and fiercest owl we have. With its great yellow eyes, conspicuous feathery ear-tufts, and large size it is not likely to be confused with other species. Mice and rabbits are its staple food, but it has the strength and weight to tackle game much larger than itself, and little that wears feathers is safe from its attacks. In the day time it is harmless enough as it seeks the shade of dense forests and dreams the time away, but at night it sallies forth on silent wing and few dispute its right of might.

The Horned Owl is distributed across the continent but divides up into a number of geographical races. The birds of the northeast and northwest coasts are very black, whereas those of the mid-sections of the country are very white, occasionally almost immaculate.

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RUFOUS HUMMINGBIRD

Selasphorus rufus

Le Colibri roux

Length, about 3.5 inches

Eastern Canada has only one hummingbird, but British Columbia has three. Of these the Rufous is the commonest and the most showy. Hummingbirds are nectar-feeders but a certain amount of minute insects is necessary to their welfare. Flowers always attract them, but often great numbers gather about the black birches that have been drilled by sapsuckers. They sip from the dripping boughs, humming from spot to spot, fight furiously like elfin knights in jewelled armour, and fill the air with their humming wings and faint sharp squeaks.

The nest is a gem of craftsmanship—a deftly and deeply hollowed knob of the softest plant-down covered with bits of grey lichen and fastened to a mossy twig with spider's web.

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BELTED KINGFISHER

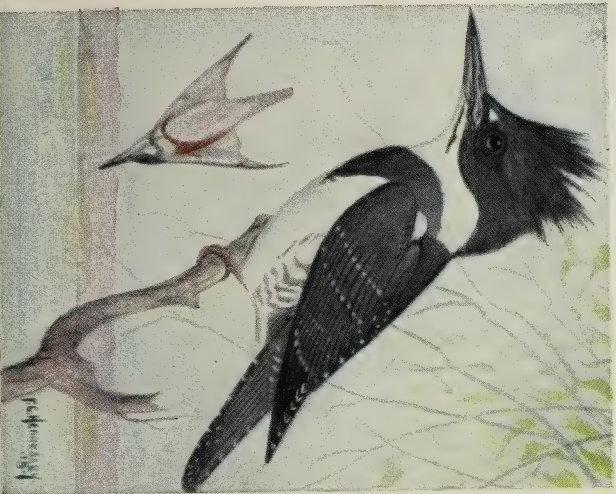
Megasceryle alcyon

Le Martin-pêcheur

Length, about 13 inches

The Kingfisher with its striking blue and white coloration, large ragged crest, and rattling call is a familiar feature of most of our streams, ponds, lakes, and coasts.

Wherever water contains fish and is clear enough to be pierced by a bird's-eye view, the Kingfisher will be found. It feeds on small fry that it captures by a sudden splashy dive. Ordinarily its depredations can be looked upon with leniency, as even at the worst what it takes is only a bagatelle compared to the toll the bigger fish levy upon the smaller ones; but occasionally, in specially protected waters such as those given primarily to trout, when other enemies to fish are also eliminated, the Kingfisher may cause some disquiet.



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YELLOW-SHAFTED FLICKER

Colaptes auratus

Le Pic doré

Length, about 12 inches

This Flicker ranges over practically all of northern forested North America east of the Rocky Mountains, and not many birds are so widely or so generally known, as its multitude of local names suggest. Highholder, Yellow Hammer, Golden-winged Woodpecker are the commoner and more distinctive of these terms. The flickering golden underwing surface and conspicuous white rump as it flies, its bold black outline against the sky as it holds to the tipmost twig of the dead trees in the slashings, and its loud, strident calls attract the attention of even the casual observer.

Dead stubs, telegraph poles, or even the sides of buildings may be used as sites in which to excavate the nest. Indeed, the Flicker may be regarded as the carpenter among birds, for its numerous abandoned nest-holes are occupied by many other species dependent upon such cavities for nests, yet unable to make them for themselves. Without the Flicker many another bird would be unable to find a home.

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HAIRY WOODPECKER

Dendrocopos villosus

Le Pic chevelu

Length, about 9.5 inches

This is the larger of our two small, black and white spotted woodpeckers. In one form or another it is common wherever there are trees in Canada. It is a familiar sight in our garden and city shade trees and in our orchards.

Economically, it is entirely favourable to man. It may dig into the tree trunks but never without due cause and only to remove some deep-seated grub that is already undermining a fair exterior and threatening the tree's existence.

The Hairy Woodpeckers of the far west are darker by colour than the eastern ones, and the whites are distinctly smoky in tone instead of pure. This form is known as Harris's Hairy Woodpecker.

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EASTERN KINGBIRD

Tyrannus tyrannus

Le Tyran tritri

Length, about 8.5 inches

The Kingbird is found nearly from coast to coast, and wherever found it makes its presence known. Its antipathy to hawk or crow, and the courage and success with which it assails them, has given it the name of Kingbird. It guards its territory well and noisily, and few are the intruders that care to face its furious attack and chattering scolding.

It has another popular name of "Bee-martin," given for its love of bees, and apiarists do not generally look kindly on its presence. Investigation, however, shows that in the bees it snaps up, it wisely chooses mostly drones and prudently avoids the stinging workers that are the real value to the hive.

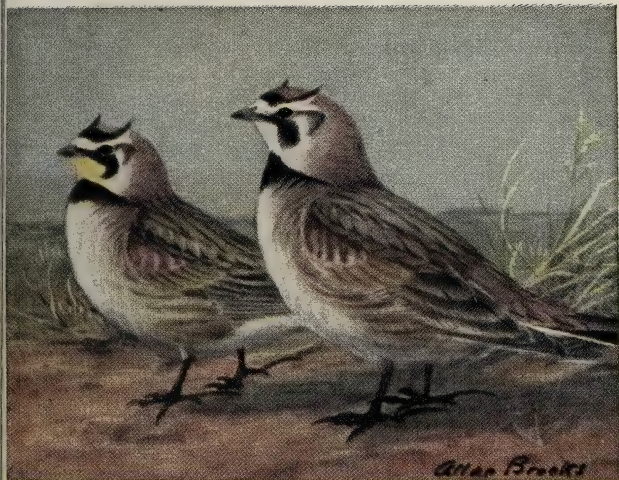


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HORNED LARK

Eremophila alpestris

L'Alouette cornue

Length, about 7.75 inches

The Horned Lark is distinctly a bird of the prairies and probably originally was more or less confined to the treeless mid-continent and the high barrens north, but with the advent of civilization and the disappearance of the eastern forests it has spread eastward over the artificial man-made prairies thus established. Now throughout the fields of southern Ontario and Quebec and across the continent, in one form or another it is a fairly common bird.

In the winter, large flocks come down from the barrens of the north but show slightly different characters from those of the resident or breeding birds.

Horned Larks are easily recognized by the prominent feather tufts like miniature horns at the sides of the head. They are very early breeders, often nesting before snow is quite off the ground, and have an interesting flight song suggestive of that of the Skylark of Europe.

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TREE SWALLOW

Iridoprocne bicolor

L'Hirondelle bicolore

Length, about 6 inches

The Tree Swallow or White-bellied Swallow is a hole-nester. Its natural nesting places are hollows in isolated dead trees, or old woodpecker holes wherever found in the open. It comes readily to bird boxes and is probably the most common tenant of such structures in our gardens.

The flashing white of its vest and underparts, in contrast with the steely gleam of its back above, and its pretty twittering warbles in the very early spring make it a most attractive bird to have about. It is often mistaken for the Purple Martin by those unfamiliar with birds, but the pure white instead of dark grey or solid black breast, to say nothing of its smaller size, is a very conspicuous distinction.

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BARN SWALLOW

Hirundo rustica

L'Hirondelle des granges

Length, about 7 inches

The favourite spot for the Barn Swallow to place its rough mud nest is on small projections under the eaves. In barns where there are open rafters, the plates are commonly used and even inside on collar beams and tops of purlins. The Swallows are domestic and social birds and are likely to form large communities and return year after year to the home of their choice.

They are purely insect feeders, catching their food in the air, and are a decided asset to the farmers. Much like the Cliff Swallow in general appearance, they are easily distinguished by their very deeply forked tails and the solid dark colour of their rumps.

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GRAY JAY

Perisoreus canadensis

Le Geai gris

Length, about 13 inches

The Gray Jay, Canada Jay, Whiskey Jack, or Camp Robber is well known to the northern hunter but is less familiar to the husbandman of more settled regions. A friend at every campfire, a companion of lonely watches, bold even to familiarity, but a confirmed thief of trifles, it is regarded with an indulgent if somewhat patronizing affection. In spite of its attraction to man and its naïve friendliness for him, perhaps because of it, the Canada Jay never stands civilization. As soon as the lonely camp is replaced by permanent cabin, and stumpy fields spot the virgin forest, Whiskey Jack retires farther into the recesses, and the place of his former abundance knows him no more, except as a stray visitor.

The Canada Jay is found in the spruce forests across the continent.

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BLACK-BILLED MAGPIE

Pica pica

La Pie bavarde

Length, about 15 inches

The Magpie in both plumage and character is made up of sharp contrasts of black and white. It has great beauty and intelligence and is a most interesting bird, but it is a natural born robber, and although its intelligence makes its criminality more efficient, sympathy for its attractive qualities often disarms justice. No nest eggs or young birds are safe from its depredations, and it even steals into the poultry runs and plunders in spite of the exasperated owner's watch and ward. Occasionally it also enlarges the harness-galls, bot sores, or other abrasions on horses and cattle to the serious detriment and sometimes even the death of the animal. In spite of its decided picturesque qualities, it is a bird that should be kept in strict control.

It inhabits the western prairies and westward. In the eastern extension of its range in Manitoba, it fluctuates in numbers over a series of years, sometimes locally common, again scarce or absent.

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AMERICAN CROW

Corvus brachyrhynchos

La Corneille américaine

Length, about 19 inches

The much-discussed Crow is a bird of many phases and, depending on time, place, and local interests, much can be said both for and against it. It is found right across the continent except on the extreme west coast where its place is taken by the Northwest Crow, a very closely allied, but slightly smaller, species of similar habits.

In the east the great objection to the Crow is as a puller of sprouting corn, and scarecrows are a common feature of the fields. In the west its greatest harm is done to nesting game, as through the early summer it is a confirmed, systematic, and efficient nest robber and devourer of young birds. The damage it does to wild life in this direction cannot easily be over-estimated. But the evil it does is seasonal, and the number of cut worms, grubs, and grasshoppers it devours through much of the year may be an important agricultural factor. The Crow may be as black as it is painted, but it is a glossy fellow and shows many bright highlights to confuse the picture.

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BLACK-CAPPED CHICKADEE

Parus atricapillus

La Mésange à tête noire

Length, about 5.25 inches

MOUNTAIN CHICKADEE

Parus gambeli

La Mésange de montagnes

Length, about 5.25 inches

These two chickadees are so nearly alike in form, colour, and habit as to bear treatment together. The Black-capped extends across the continent practically from coast to coast. The Mountain Chickadee is confined to the western mountains. They are both permanent residents wherever found and do not migrate in winter.

The chickadee is the merriest and happiest denizen of the woods. No matter what the weather may be, its soft "Chickadee-dee-dee" or its sweet, clear "Spring's here" is always cheery and bright. It hangs from the airiest branch-tips and swings right or wrong side up, with equal ease, while it investigates with microscopic eye for minute insect food that might grow large and great with damaging possibilities.

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WHITE-BREADED NUTHATCH

Sitta
carolinensis
La Sittelle à
poitrine blanche

Length, about 6 inches

The Nuthatches are indefatigable searchers of tree trunks and bark crevices. They creep up and down the boles, head up or down, forwards or backwards, on top or underneath, as the case may be, with equal indifference. The laws of gravity that rule the world seem nothing to them. Their food is mainly insect eggs, larvae, and bark-infesting insects, though they occasionally wedge acorns or other soft-shelled nuts in some firm crevice and there "hatch" or hack them open, perhaps as much for the worm concealed as for the meat contained.

The White-breasted Nuthatch is more or less common in more southern woodlands across Canada. Its usual note is a dull "quank, quank, quank", that is one of the characteristic sounds of the winter woods.

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AMERICAN ROBIN

Turdus migratorius

Le Merle américain

Length, about 10 inches

There is no Canadian who does not know the familiar Robin. It is one of the very first birds to arrive in spring as a herald of better days to come. It builds its mud-lined nest under the eaves of our porches. It hunts our lawns for worms and grubs, and in the autumn it lingers with us until it strips the berries from the rowan tree in the garden. At all times it is a familiar friend, and it has made a place for itself in our affections that is filled by no other bird.

Of course, it is no very close relation of the European Robin Red-breast of song and story, so well known in the Old Country, but was named Robin by the first settlers of the country in memory of that bird which it somewhat resembles and whose place it seems to take in the new land. It is found almost everywhere across forested parts of Canada.

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GRAY-CHEEKED THRUSH

Hylocichla minima

La Grive à joues grises

Length, about 7 inches

OLIVE-BACKED THRUSH

Hylocichla ustulata

La Grive à dos olivâtre

Length, about 7 inches

Two thrushes so nearly alike in appearance and habit as to make them difficult of distinction one from the other. However, note the general greyiness on the side of the face of the one and the faint buffy eye-ring on the other.

They are both birds of the deep woods and occur more or less commonly across the continent. They share with the Hermit Thrush the reputation of having the most musically toned voices and most liquidly pure songs of any of our American birds. The songs are not long nor complicated, but their pure tones coming from the black shadows of the spruce forest seem to match the colours of the golden sunset.



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EASTERN BLUEBIRD

Sialia sialis

Le Merle bleu à gorge rouge

Length, about 7 inches

Next to the Robin the Bluebird is perhaps the most beloved of our common birds. It nests readily in bird boxes in the suburbs, and with its pretty warbling song, gentle ways, and wonderful cerulean colour, it endears itself to all. Coming early while the fields are still bare and sere, it is one of the harbingers of spring, and its soft notes coming down from above in the autumn mournfully presage the coming of stern winter.

Once, in many sections one of the commonest of birds, its numbers are now, from some unknown cause, reduced. It still nests in many gardens, but when it does so, it is a distinct matter of congratulation to the owner instead of the matter of course it once was.

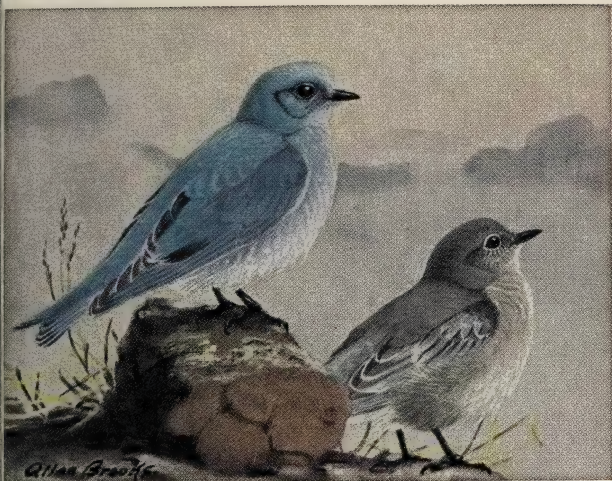
The Eastern Bluebird is found over most of southern Canada westward, including the eastern prairies.

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MOUNTAIN BLUEBIRD

Sialia currucoides

Le Merle bleu de montagnes

Length, about 7 inches

As the common Eastern Bluebird is to the east, so the Mountain Bluebird is to the west, from much of the prairies to the coast. It comes readily to bird boxes and has all the pretty ways of the eastern bird. It inhabits the gardens and builds in the out-buildings, and is equally at home in the heat-baked coulées of the bad lands and the lonely passes of mountains and brulés. Its pretty warbling song gives a feeling of happy peace, and its delicate ethereal blue seems not of this world but of Maeterlinck's Bluebird of Happiness come to earth.

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LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE

Lanius ludovicianus

La Pie-Grièche migratrice

Length, about 9 inches

Shrikes are song birds that have developed raptorial habits. They feed on the larger insects and on mice and small birds, and in proportion to their size they may be as destructive as any hawk. Though armed with stout hooked bills, their talons are weak and unfitted for holding prey, and from their habit of impaling their food on thorns, the better to dismember it, they are often called Butcher-birds.

This is the common summer shrike across the continent. It usually inhabits open cattle-grazed meadows and builds its nest in dense thorn bushes whenever they are available. It sometimes utters a very agreeable song.

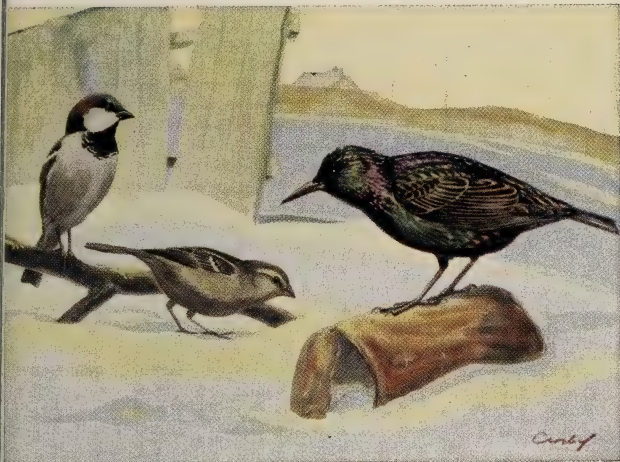
The shrike that is seen in winter is a larger, hardier species breeding in the Far North.

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HOUSE SPARROW (left)

Passer domesticus

Le Moineau domestique

Length, 5 to 6 inches

This Old World alien was first brought from England to North America about 1850 and released in New York. Additional introductions were made in the next 25 years. It has now spread throughout the settled parts of North America. Its harsh chirping is a familiar sound in most Canadian cities, towns, and farmyards, both in summer and winter. The female is duller coloured than the male, and she lacks his black throat patch.

EUROPEAN STARLING (right)

Sturnus vulgaris

L'Étourneau sansonnet

Length, 7.5 to 8.5 inches

This is another alien. It was introduced from Europe into New York City in 1890 and now is found in most settled parts of North America, often in large flocks. Although its plumage is seen to be highly iridescent at close range, it looks like a short-tailed blackbird in the distance. Male and female are coloured alike.

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SOLITARY VIREO

Vireo solitarius

Le Vireo à tête bleue

Length, about 5.5 inches

Among the flocks of warblers that pass through the woods and orchards, spring and autumn, are some similar but rather heavier and less active birds dressed in full olive greens and yellows. These are likely to be vireos, of which there are several species. The slate-blue head with rather conspicuous white facial spot are the distinctive characters of the Solitary Vireo.

This bird is found in the woodlands across the continent. The British Columbian representative of the species is slightly different from the eastern one and is known in distinction as Cassin's Vireo.

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BLACK AND WHITE WARBLER

Mniotilta varia La Fauvette noire et blanche

Length, about 5.25 inches

A small, sharply streaked, black and white bird, creeping woodpecker-like about the boles and branches of the trees, is easily recognized as the Black and White Warbler. The only bird resembling it in colour or pattern is the Black-poll Warbler, but it does not creep, is distinctly larger, and the black cap is solid and not divided by a white median line.

It is common from eastern Canada west to the mountains.

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YELLOW WARBLER

Dendroica petechia

La Fauvette jaune

Length, about 5 inches



The Yellow Warbler or Summer Yellow-bird incorrectly shares the name of "Wild Canary" with the Goldfinch. Observation, however, will show that this species is practically all yellow except for some fine orange stripes on the breast, and its bill is slender and slight instead of stout and conical as in the Canary and other sparrows.

It is a familiar inhabitant of our gardens and groves across the continent and is as likely to build its nest of soft cottony fibres in the lilac bush in the garden as elsewhere.

One of its most interesting habits is that of building a new nest over the old when a Cowbird lays in it, thus burying the intruder's eggs in the mass and preventing its hatching. Two and even three-storey nests thus made are not uncommon.

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MARYLAND YELLOW-THROAT

Geothlypis trichas

La Fauvette masquée

Length, about 5.25 inches

The Maryland Yellow-throat is an inhabitant of the long grass of the wet meadows or drier swamps across the continent. In such places its little "*Witchery, witchery, witchery*" song is characteristic, as is also the rough scolding note with which it greets every intruder and gives him a piece of its mind. It seems to gain courage from the fact that it wears a mask. It can well be suspected that could its language be interpreted it would not bear repetition.

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AMERICAN REDSTART

Setophaga ruticilla La Fauvette Flamboyante

Length, about 5.5 inches

A brightly coloured American bird named after a familiar Old Country species, but only distantly related to it. It is found across the continent to the eastern Rocky Mountains and sometimes across them.

The Redstart is a bird of the deciduous tree tops of heavier growth. High up in the trees where colours are lost to sight, it can often be recognized by its restlessness and constant tail-flirting.

(Series A, No. 43) National Museum of Canada, Ottawa.

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BOBOLINK

Polichonx argivorus

Length, about 7 inches

Le Goglu

The Bobolink is the rollicking joyous spirit of the eastern meadows, breeding westward as far as southeastern British Columbia. Where it is common, its ecstatic love song that marks it as the perfect lover is familiar to every barefoot boy trudging to and from the schoolhouse, and has inspired one of the finest and most spirited poems that American wildlife has produced.

Unfortunately there is another side to its character and habits. When it leaves us here in Canada, dressed in a dull olive livery of autumn, it gathers on the southern rice fields in incredible numbers, carrying local devastation with it. There it is known as that pest the "Rice Bird" and formerly was made to make such restitution as it could by furnishing the subject matter of rice-bird pies which were famous in the Carolinas.

Though rice-bird pies are not now legal and Rice-birds are not now sold in the markets, direct action is still necessary at times to save the threatened crops.

(Series A, No. 44) National Museum of Canada, Ottawa.



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RED-WINGED BLACKBIRD

Agelaius phoeniceus

Le Carouge à épaulettes

Length, about 9.5 inches

Most of the reedy pools and marshes of the cultivated parts of Canada have their colony of Red-wings. They are most spectacular birds with their glossy black uniforms with striking red epaulettes that have given them a common name of "Soldier Blackbirds."

Though they can hardly be called songsters in the conventional use of the word, they are generous with many clear whistled calls and rolls that make a very pleasing accompaniment to the activities of their gay communities.

The nest is a well-woven structure in the tops of previous year's reeds, lined with cat-tail down and other soft fibre. As the new growth comes up through the old it makes a pretty structure. The eggs are pale blue with many irregular hieroglyphic scrawls of black.

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BALTIMORE ORIOLE

Icterus galbula

L'Oriole de Baltimore

Length, about 7.5 inches

Named after Lord Baltimore, the patron of the early settlement of Maryland, whose bright livery it wears, the Baltimore Oriole is a bird of the east, extending in Canada to the base of the Rocky mountains. It is particularly a bird of the park lands, and great trees standing isolated or in clumps, especially elms, are its delight. Its nest is a work of art. Felted, and woven of vegetable fibre, wool, string, or any kind of fluff, it forms a substantial deep bag suspended at the ends of long, lithe, or weeping bough tips where even the red squirrel dare not go. In the branches the brilliant male sings throughout the summer, demonstrating with its clear, flute-like whistles that bright feather and beautiful voice can go together. In the winter, while it is sojourning in the warmth of South America, its deserted nest whips and cracks at the ends of the long, lash-like stems, defying with its perfect workmanship the storms of successive seasons that scatter lesser structures in fragments over the ground.

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SCARLET TANAGER

Piranga olivacea

Le Tangara écarlate

Length, about 7 inches

This wondrously and tropically coloured bird is a more or less common species over most of eastern Canada. However, as a rule it hides its showiness in the concealing tree tops, and the ordinary observer regards a sight of it as quite an event.

It has a very pretty warbling song like that of a glorified Robin, but the best suggestion of its nearby presence and the advisability of looking closer for it is its low "Chip-churr" that is its most characteristic note.

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EVENING GROSBEEK

*Hesperiphona
vespertina*

Le Gros-bec errant

Length, about 8 inches

Of late years, with growing regularity, our eastern cities and villages have been visited in winter by flocks of sturdily built birds, a proportion of which show golden bodies and black wings strikingly marked with white in flight. They feed very largely on the fruit of the Manitoba Maple or Box Elder and when these seeds are locally consumed they usually depart for further supplies. They are Evening Grosbeaks.

They nest in the spruce forest north of Lake Superior, an indeterminate distance westward, and again locally in the mountains of British Columbia, and recently have extended their breeding range eastward to the Maritimes. Originally they rarely came down into settled districts, by the general planting of their favourite food of late years seems to have lured them from their northern fastnesses, and they now are almost regular winter visitors where before they were almost unknown.



Am. Birds.

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AMERICAN GOLDFINCH

Spinus tristis

Le Chardonneret jaune

Length, about 5 inches

The Goldfinch, Thistle Bird, or Wild Canary is a familiar figure over most cultivated parts of Canada. Goldfinch is a name given in memory of a somewhat similar but entirely different bird of the Old Country. Thistle Bird suggests one of its favourite foods, though sunflower seeds are its delight. "Wild Canary" has an obvious derivation, though it is not a very close relative of that familiar species. A bird it may be confused with is the Yellow Warbler or Summer Yellow-bird, but note that that species is all yellow and lacks the black wings, tail, and jaunty cap.

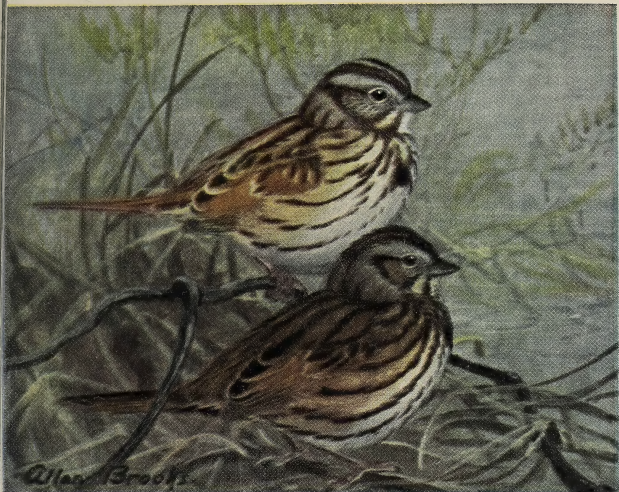
The Goldfinch is a delightful little fellow, usually going in small groups or little flocks, with pretty ways and cheery and canary-like chirps and song. A row of sunflowers in the garden is a never failing attraction to it in fruit time, though seeding lettuce heads or many garden seeds are appreciated.

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SONG SPARROW

Melospiza melodia

Le Pinson chanteur

Length, about 3.25 inches

Next to the Robin perhaps the Song Sparrow is the most generally distributed and familiarly homy of our birds. Its dark, inconspicuously streaked plumage and rather retiring ways make it a less showy bird than many, but its cheery song coming first thing in spring and lasting until well into the summer, and its mouse-like form gliding back into the brush or the density of the flower beds, just outside the door, endear it to all.

A number of sparrows look much like the Song Sparrow, but its distinctive marks are the sharply spotted breast, aggregating in a larger blotch in the centre, and the lack of white in its tail.

The Song Sparrows of British Columbia are much darker and richer coloured than those of the east and are referred to distinct subspecies.

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